Sambalpur-Rourkela and Bhubaneshwar-Sambalpur road

1684. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the need to four-lane Sambalpur-Rourkela and Bhubaneshwar-Sambalpur-road;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if so, the time frame fixed for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) No, Madam.

(b) Presently, the priority of this Ministry is to improve the riding quality of all the National Highways and four laning of the corridors included in the National Highway Development Project (NHDP). The road from Bhubaneshwar to Jagatpur has already been four laned. Four laning of the remaining stretches would be considered in a phased manner after the completion of riding quality improvement and NHDP depending on the availability of resources, traffic needs and *inter-se* priority.

Conversion of State Highways into National Highways

1685. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have rejected certain proposals of the State Governments for declaring State Highways into National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (c) No, Sir. All the proposals for conversion of State Highways into National Highways have been returned to the respective State Governments. Presently there is a ban on declaration of new National Highways due to fund constraints. The Government may, however, consider conversion of very limited lengths of a few State Highways into